



Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6101st meeting

Monday, 6 April 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Heller	(Mexico)
<i>Members:</i>	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Ms. Rice
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2009/129)

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09-29184 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of April 2009, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Shalgham, Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of March 2009. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing appreciation to Ambassador Shalgham for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2009/129)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mèrorès (Haiti) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi,

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, President of the Economic and Social Council; Mr. Albert R. Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States; Mr. Pedro Medrano, Director for the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food Programme; Ms. Yvonne Tsikata, Country Director for the Caribbean of the World Bank; Ms. Dora Currea, General Manager of the Department of the Caribbean Countries of the Inter-American Development Bank; Mr. Niky Fabiancic, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme; and Ms. Corinne Delechat, Mission Chief for Haiti of the International Monetary Fund.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/129, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. Council members also have before them photocopies of the report of the Security Council mission to Haiti, which will be issued as document S/2009/175.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Annabi: I am pleased to be back in the Security Council and to join this discussion of the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The wide participation in today's debate underscores the high level of international commitment to the stabilization process in Haiti. It builds upon the Security Council's visit to Haiti from 11 to 14 March and on the visit by the Secretary-General and former President Clinton that took place

on 9 and 10 March. We hope that the international community will make a further effort two weeks from now, at the 14 April conference on Haiti to be hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C.

Sustained international engagement is critical to enable Haiti to take advantage of a unique moment of opportunity. The country now has its best chance in decades to break from the destructive cycles of the past and to move towards a brighter future. But it can do so only with the continued strong support of external partners. The Secretary-General has suggested that in order to consolidate Haiti's stability, progress must be made in addressing five interlinked challenges: first, political dialogue, including elections; secondly, extension of State authority; thirdly, strengthening security; fourthly, the rule of law and human rights; and fifthly, socio-economic development.

The report of the Secretary-General now before the members of the Security Council (S/2009/129) summarizes advances that have taken place in each of those areas over the past six months. In order to provide a context for today's discussion, I would like to update and supplement that analysis, focusing on recent developments, key tasks that remain and where the further assistance of the international community will be indispensable.

First, with reference to political dialogue and elections, the resolution of political differences through dialogue remains the cornerstone of advancement in all other areas. There have been some positive developments in this necessarily Haitian-led process. In the aftermath of last year's hurricanes, we witnessed a new potential for cooperation among representatives from across Haiti's political spectrum and between the various institutions of governance, the private sector and civil society. Last December, the Government and Parliament adopted for the first time a joint legislative agenda. The establishment by President Préval at the beginning of this year of a series of broad-based commissions on key national issues represents a further effort to promote dialogue and collaboration. Council members will recall that they met with the leaders of some of those commissions during their visit.

This progress, however, remains fragile. There is a risk of renewed conflict among political institutions and between the executive and legislative branches of Government. These tensions are often related to

personal ambitions and fed by the scourge of corruption, which the Government is seeking to curb.

At this critical time, Haiti cannot afford the kind of discord that paralysed the country for almost five months last year. It is essential that the Haitian leadership in the executive and legislative branches, in civil society and the private sector rise to the challenge and work together constructively. The international community can and should contribute by demonstrating that it stands with those who seek collaboration and that it will hold accountable those who promote conflict and instability.

The ongoing electoral process for renewal of one third of the Senate, which can reinforce political cooperation in the longer term, has nonetheless brought some additional strains in the short term. Over the past months, we saw considerable tensions related to participation in the polls. Today, however, the process is moving ahead. We hope that the Haitian people will take full advantage of this opportunity to make their voice heard and to select leaders with the necessary ethical and professional qualities.

These elections are indispensable to permit the proper functioning of the Parliament. It is therefore essential that they take place in a climate that is free from disruption or violence. At the same time, as mandated by the Security Council, MINUSTAH is providing the necessary logistical and security support for the electoral process, in close collaboration with the Haitian authorities. I am pleased to say that, at this time, the first round appears to be broadly on track to take place on 19 April, as envisaged, although the timeline remains tight.

Secondly, as regards the extension of State authority, MINUSTAH continues to assist the Government in developing administrative capacity in areas that are related to the mandate at both the national and local levels, drawing in particular on our civil affairs officers. This is a long-term process, but some progress is being made. An integrated border management strategy is beginning to take shape, including the revision of the customs code, whose adoption features on Haiti's joint legislative agenda. That effort has been complemented by the provision of bilateral funds to create necessary infrastructure along the border. We are also providing support to local administrations in the conduct of a number of basic tasks, including budget preparation.

But it is clear that MINUSTAH's efforts can barely begin to make a difference in enabling the State administration to respond to the needs of the population. We therefore welcome the bilateral and multilateral programmes that have been launched to help build capacity in a number of ministries, and we hope that further efforts will be made along those lines. Those efforts could be facilitated through the adoption by the Government of a clear plan for strengthening public administration, drawing on existing blueprints.

The strengthening of Haiti's security structures represents a third area where there have been significant advances, but where further efforts are required. Over the past four years, based on steadily increasing collaboration between MINUSTAH and the Haitian authorities, Haiti has seen a remarkable improvement in its security situation. The dispersal of armed groups in rural areas in 2004 and 2005 and the dismantling of gangs in urban strongholds in 2006 and 2007 were followed, over the second half of last year, by increased effectiveness in curbing kidnapping, which was having a disproportionately demoralizing impact on the population.

We are building on that progress with further initiatives to promote security in border areas and have complemented the deployment of troops along the land border with the Dominican Republic and along the coast with maritime and airborne patrolling. We hope that those latest efforts will be of assistance in promoting security throughout the Haitian territory and in deterring illicit trafficking activities. At the same time, we recognize that they cannot alone represent an effective response to the problem of trafficking, which constitutes a key threat to Haiti's stability. They must be reinforced through engagement by other countries within the region that can assist by sharing information and with complementary patrolling and, as appropriate, coordinated operations.

Meanwhile, we are advancing with our programmes to strengthen Haiti's own security capability. A class of 702 Haitian police cadets graduated in February, making a total of more than 9,200 active police officers. The training of an additional 450 cadets was launched last December, and recruitment for the next promotion is ongoing. It is essential that this pace be maintained in order to reach the target envisaged in the Haitian police reform plan of 14,000 police officers by the end of 2011. We also continue to push forward with the vetting process,

together with the Haitian police, in order to ensure that those who are serving have the necessary professional standards and qualifications. Bilateral assistance has been made available to help meet a number of key needs in terms of infrastructure and equipment, but a lot more is needed.

That progress is encouraging. At the same time, as was clear during the riots last spring and the hurricanes last summer, MINUSTAH's troops and police remain indispensable when a real crisis erupts. The country continues to face a number of threats, including a significant risk of civil unrest, reflecting Haiti's difficult living conditions and the continued presence on the ground of a number of potentially violent elements, including former gang members and discontented army veterans. Those threats could be activated for political or criminal motivations or to inhibit reform programmes that target corruption, smuggling and trafficking. In that context, MINUSTAH's security components are needed to promote a sense of security among the Haitian people, to deter spoilers and to spare a still vulnerable Haitian police force from unmanageable challenges or setbacks that could deal a fatal blow to its morale and credibility.

Fourth is the rule of law and human rights. In the area of justice reforms, there has been progress towards the establishment of the key supervisory body the Superior Council of the Judiciary. The Minister of Justice announced recently that the Superior Council would soon be installed, subject to the outcome of the vetting process, which is almost complete. In the interim, a judicial inspectorate has been created within the Ministry of Justice in order to provide the necessary oversight of judges.

The 12 March opening of the School of Magistrates represented a further major development. I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their participation in that ceremony, which offered a clear indication of the importance that they attach to the justice reform process.

As regards corrections reform, there has been some progress in training corrections staff and in the rehabilitation of prisons, but the situation in Haiti's corrections facilities remains unacceptable from the perspective of human rights and security. It is critical that that process be given continued priority by Haiti's leadership and strong bilateral support.

In the area of human rights, we are seeing historically remarkable levels of public debate and of respect for freedom of the press, as well as for civil liberties in general. We have also been encouraged by the broad interest of the Government and of civil society in a human rights approach that integrates economic and social concerns. However, limited progress has been made in the strengthening of the Office de la protection du citoyen — the office of the ombudsman — which will play a critical role in ensuring the sustainability of human rights gains.

Fifth and last is social and economic development. Socio-economic issues are not, of course, the core work of a peacekeeping operation. However, it remains clear that in Haiti, the promotion of security and development are very closely linked. The current levels of deprivation and poverty in the country are incompatible with durable stability. If we are to succeed in our efforts, it is essential that there be an improvement in people's daily lives, or at least a realistic hope of such an improvement.

In that context, we have been deeply concerned over the deterioration of the socio-economic situation in 2008. The scope of the damage wrought by last summer's hurricanes is estimated at about \$1 billion, or equivalent to 15 per cent of Haiti's gross domestic product. That has now been compounded by the global financial crisis, which in February, compared to the previous February, brought a 14 per cent reduction in the remittances that constitute a lifeline for many Haitian families and represent nearly three times the figure for international assistance.

In that context, we continue to believe that assistance must be directed in three broad areas. First, we believe that continued humanitarian relief is essential. Without it, many Haitians will have little to eat, no capacity to send their children to school and no access to basic services.

Secondly, it is critical to assist with early recovery, focusing on providing jobs, while tackling urgently needed rehabilitation and reconstruction tasks that can also support longer-term development. We hope that more bilateral assistance can be provided, including with reference to the various projects that have been outlined in the post-disaster needs assessment, conducted jointly by the Government, the European Union, the World Bank and the United Nations.

Thirdly, we continue to call for longer-term development, which depends upon the regeneration of private-sector activity. The growth and poverty reduction strategy paper had already helped to identify certain key priorities of the Haitian Government for the future. Over the past few months, that has been helpfully supplemented by the work of Professor Collier, who has pointed out that Haiti offers real potential for investors, particularly in the area of garment manufacturing, taking advantage of existing advantageous trade agreements. But Professor Collier also noted that, in order to leverage that potential, certain conditions must be put in place — in particular, the enhancement of key roads and ports, the development of electricity and the adoption of certain legislative and policy measures to create a truly investment-friendly environment.

The realization of such a programme requires a renewed partnership among national authorities, who must take the necessary decisions; international actors, whose assistance is essential if the required improvements in infrastructure are to be undertaken; and the private sector, which will need to take advantage of those new opportunities. We earnestly hope that the 14 April Washington conference will facilitate agreement on such a forward-looking agenda, based on mutual commitments and accountability. At the same time, we hope that participants will be able to help the Government to bridge a short-term requirement for budget support, which amounts to some \$125 million for the current fiscal year.

Finally, visitors over the past month have underlined that Haiti is at a turning point and that this is the first time in many years that the country truly appears to be poised to make a break from a past of suffering, poverty and violence and towards a path of sustainable social and economic development. We agree with that analysis. We believe that today, Haiti has a real chance to consolidate the stability that we have all worked hard to establish. But that can happen only with sustained and coordinated support for progress in all areas of stabilization, drawing on a strong partnership among Haitians, MINUSTAH, the United Nations country team and the wider international community.

This is, of course, a difficult environment in which to ask for further assistance. However, at a time when so much has been achieved, there is a compelling logic for making an additional effort — one that will

be relatively modest in absolute terms but can make a critical difference in securing the investments made to date and can prevent the major costs that would be associated with any renewed decline or disorder.

The international community has made a remarkable contribution in providing opportunity to Haiti. Our Haitian counterparts are today showing a clear determination to seize that chance. I hope that, with the support of the Security Council, that partnership may be sustained in order to enable the efforts made to date to come to fruition and to place Haiti firmly on the path towards the better future that it has sought for so long.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Shalgham and the Libyan delegation on their excellent work during the month of March.

I should like to begin by warmly thanking Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his very comprehensive briefing this morning. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Mr. Annabi, to his colleagues in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and also to the Government and the people of Haiti for their exceptional support and assistance during the successful Security Council mission only a few weeks ago. I think it was an eye-opening experience for many of us — including me — to have first-hand experience with the activities and to see the people of the Mission, as well as the Government and local leaders. I also believe that it demonstrated the value of Security Council missions to various places.

We welcome the fact that the security situation in Haiti has improved greatly thanks to the support of the international community and the efforts made, in particular by the military and police components of MINUSTAH. We witnessed on the ground that MINUSTAH's presence is clearly making a difference in Haiti.

At the same time, however, we need to be mindful that security in Haiti remains in a fragile state. The next presidential election, to be held in November next year, and the revision of the Constitution will be milestones in the political process on which Haiti has embarked. But they could be accompanied by political tensions or even disturbances, which we should try to contain and deal with.

Thus, the presence of MINUSTAH troops and police will continue to be as important as it has been thus far, as the Haitian National Police is not yet able to respond effectively on its own to unrest. We welcome the steady progress in the capacity-building of the National Police, which has been greatly assisted by the strong support and guidance that the Mission has been providing. However, continued technical support from MINUSTAH is clearly indispensable to achieving the target of building a strong police force of 14,000 members by 2011. Similarly, bilateral assistance and support is required in order to meet the need for equipment and facilities.

Lasting security and political stability will not be achieved solely through a military and police presence or even through the political process alone. Progress must be made on the social and economic fronts. The year 2008 was a difficult one for Haiti. Early in the year, high food prices greatly affected the country, and in August and September major hurricanes hit, devastating many parts of the country. And this occurred against the backdrop of the global financial crisis.

In order to achieve sustainable development, the Government of Haiti needs to demonstrate to its people and to the international community a clear vision of what self-development entails, as well as the will to assume ownership of such a major task. To that end, it will be necessary for the Government to attach priority to the development strategy in its overall national policy, to create that policy in consultation with international supporters and to make it an implementable strategy.

The international community, for its part, should match Haiti's efforts by extending support that enables the Haitian people to receive a peace dividend and the stability that will make it possible for them to move forward with the work of construction. The upcoming Haiti donor conference in Washington, D.C., will provide an important opportunity to reaffirm the

support for economic development. I hope that conference participants will demonstrate the depth of that support, not only by expressing political commitment, but also by pledging, quite specifically, the financial assistance that they will provide.

Food security and job creation are two of the urgent issues that we need to address. The fact that, at present, the rate of self-sufficiency in food production in Haiti is only 48 per cent, even though more than half of the working population is engaged in the agricultural sector, underscores the importance of securing sufficient food security by formulating coherent policy measures that will make it possible for the country to increase food productivity. That would also help to improve the unemployment issue and contribute to long-term development.

In that context, we are very grateful to the Secretary-General for commissioning Professor Collier to prepare his valuable recommendations. They must be translated into concrete policy measures for implementation. It is the sincere hope of my Government that coherent policy measures along the lines of those recommendations will be established by the Government of Haiti in order to achieve human security for every Haitian person.

When we consider benchmarks for MINUSTAH's presence, we will have to focus more on socio-economic development and reconstruction in order to achieve lasting stability. We should initiate a consideration process that involves all the actors and partners concerned, focusing on the factors essential to making a smooth transition from peacekeeping to the peacebuilding stage. As we enter into such a discussion, it is crucially important to bear in mind that peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts are not sequential, but overlapping. Serious peacebuilding efforts must begin while peacekeepers are present and doing appropriate work.

For that reason, steps must be taken to ensure that the eventual process of reconfiguring MINUSTAH does not, first, create a security vacuum or, secondly, lead to a reduction in the commitment and support of the international community. That can be done by assuring the people and the Government of Haiti that the international community will remain engaged in working for the country's long-term stability.

In conclusion, I would like to pay particular tribute to Mr. Annabi and his colleagues in

MINUSTAH. We are very much impressed by their dedication to the cause. I would also like to thank those countries that have contributed troops, police or logistical support. They have significantly improved the security situation under very difficult circumstances.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and to thank the Libyan presidency for the skill it demonstrated last month.

France aligns itself fully with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

Sir, I would like to thank you first of all for organizing this open debate on the situation in Haiti and the work being carried out by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Beginning with all those who are working in Haiti — and I am thinking here in particular of the Member States in the region, which will deliver statements later — the international community must remain mobilized to support the efforts of the Haitian authorities to stabilize their country and to put it on the path towards sustainable development.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General's personal work on and commitment to Haiti, particularly because, as he wrote himself a few days ago in a leading newspaper, Haiti is at a crucial stage in its history.

I would also, of course, like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for his briefing, and express once again our full support for all his work on the ground. The recent Security Council mission to Haiti, led by Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica, allowed us to have a clearer and more concrete picture of the achievements of MINUSTAH, particularly in the security sector, and of the challenges that Haiti continues to face.

As Mr. Annabi stressed earlier, Haiti is at a crucial stage in its history. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/129) shows that Haiti is enjoying the first fruits of the efforts that have been made since 2006: the re-establishment of security, the professionalization of the police force, the improvement of the transport and electricity

distribution infrastructures, growth in tax income and control of inflation.

Determined action by the Haitian authorities to follow up on that policy of stabilization and development is more than ever necessary, with the support of the international community, to meet the expectations of the people, who have already suffered a great deal, in terms of security, enhancing the rule of law and access to health care and education. In this regard, I note the very encouraging comments made earlier by the Special Representative with respect to the freedom of expression and opinion and the growing strength of the democratic legal system, which has allowed a gradual improvement in the effectiveness of efforts to counteract crime and corruption and to ensure effective protection of human rights.

The partial senatorial elections that will be held by June, with the first scheduled for 19 April, are of course critical. The proper functioning of democratic institutions depends upon them. We hope, of course, that the elections will take place in a free and transparent manner and, as Mr. Annabi said, lead to men and women taking power who are competent and committed to democracy and the rules of democracy.

However, the Government must also continue to work with all parties, as it has begun to do, on major projects that are important for the future of the country, in order to establish a common vision among all Haitians. Once again, I note the relatively positive and optimistic assessment made by Mr. Annabi.

We fully support MINUSTAH's work to help Haiti put an end to its political instability. We are aware of the successive difficulties that Haiti encountered last year, including the series of hurricanes that struck the country and whose economic and social impact was considerable. In this context, the international community's commitment, including in terms of security, is more than ever necessary in support of this process, which must be consolidated for the long term.

On this point, the international community must enhance its efforts to meet the socio-economic challenges that the country faces. That is what is at stake at the donor's conference planned for 14 April, which represents an important stage in implementing the national growth and poverty reduction strategy. The international community can rest assured that France and the European Union, which are critical partners of

Haiti, will participate in the conference with renewed resolve to be heavily involved and will do so over the long term.

We support the recommendation of the Secretary-General, which was supported by the findings of the Security Council mission, to rely on a medium-term strategy to transfer, gradually and in acceptable conditions, responsibilities that are currently assumed by the international community to the Haitians themselves. That is the goal of the consolidation plan that was submitted to us in autumn. A review of progress on the various aspects and indicators of that plan will of course be essential following the discussions that we will be having on the MINUSTAH mandate. It is also essential in that regard that, under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, all institutions in the United Nations system work in a coherent fashion.

We also hope, following the Security Council mission and in the context of the review of peacekeeping operations, that we will be able to consider the political, military and police configurations of MINUSTAH. That should take place in an inclusive way, particularly with respect to police- and troop-contributing countries, in order to ensure that their views are fully taken into account.

This approach is particularly desirable since the first assessment of the police mission was carried by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and many lessons have been learned from the experience of MINUSTAH. We encourage the DPKO to enhance its actions here and we also believe that, in the longer term, MINUSTAH should play an even greater role with regard to security sector reform to meet such security challenges as smuggling and the traffic in drugs and weapons.

To conclude, I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their support for the presidential statement that we have prepared with the delegations of Mexico and the United States.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I want to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his excellent leadership of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and to welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/129) of 6 March 2009. I also want to extend my thanks to Ambassador Mémorès, and we ask him to thank the Haitian leadership and the

representatives of the Haitian private sector and civil society for the warm reception that they extended to all of us during the Security Council's visit last month. We are also particularly pleased that former President Clinton and the Secretary-General were able to visit Haiti together, which brought additional helpful attention to the challenges and the opportunities there.

We stand at an inflection point in Haiti — a moment of real opportunity, but also one of real risk. Let me start with some of the progress that we witnessed during our visit last month. The United States salutes the work and the bravery of MINUSTAH. Thanks to its efforts and to the work of the Haitian people, progress has been made towards consolidating stability and security, including by strengthening the Haitian National Police. MINUSTAH has achieved important gains in the area of security, and we hope that its accomplishments will provide a sound basis for progress in other critical areas.

MINUSTAH's success is indeed an impressive story, but it is not the whole story. Much of Haiti's progress remains fragile, especially after the terrible difficulties of the past year. Haiti continues to face extreme hardships in the wake of the 2008 food crisis, the hurricanes and storms that struck the country and the ongoing global financial crisis. All of these factors could yet imperil Haiti's security and seriously exacerbate the poverty and privation that afflict the Haitian people.

Especially in the light of this past year's troubles, the United States is particularly encouraged by the progress Haiti has made towards the achievement of four of the five benchmarks outlined by the Secretary-General, benchmarks that have helped this Council assess progress. However, we recognize that much more must still be done in key areas. Desperate poverty, malnutrition, lack of education and other socio-economic problems continue to bedevil Haiti.

We look forward to participating actively and generously in the 14 April donor conference on Haiti, to be hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington. This gathering will provide an opportunity for partners and the Government of Haiti to help address Haiti's budget gap and move forward towards lasting recovery and development. We welcome the plan that will be presented by Prime Minister Pierre-Louis, and we believe that forms a very important basis for enhancing that partnership.

Haiti reminds us yet again that we should not view security and development as separate spheres. Indeed, they are inextricably linked. The absence of one will undermine the other. During our trip, my colleagues and I saw compelling evidence, firsthand, of how poverty and unemployment, especially among Haiti's young people, have created an environment conducive to potential civil unrest, one that could undo many of Haiti's hard-won gains.

The Secretary-General has correctly underscored the relationship between progress on security and progress in socio-economic and development efforts. The United States could not agree more. We are encouraged by the advances that have been made with the help of MINUSTAH and the bilateral donors in professionalizing the Haitian National Police, which is moving towards the goal of having 14,000 officers in its ranks by 2011. More than 9,000 have already been trained and vetted, and nearly 500 new officers will graduate by the second half of this year.

The United States will continue to work with MINUSTAH to help expand the facilities at the national police academy and create specialized leadership training there. For Haiti to be secure, it will need its police forces to stand on their own, and it will need intensified efforts to reform the justice sector as a whole, to address prison overcrowding and deepen and extend the rule of law throughout the country.

This is particularly true because of the ongoing scourge of drug trafficking, which harms Haiti and the region. My Government believes that real progress must be made here, particularly through the continued professionalization of the Haitian National Police, other stabilization efforts, assistance from Haiti's partners, including the United States, and initiatives to promote sustainable development. The United States will increase its support for the Haitian National Police's counter-narcotics efforts, which will help expand law enforcement operations throughout the country. We look forward to continuing to work with Haitian law enforcement and MINUSTAH to tackle these serious challenges.

As part of our common efforts, we urge the Government of Haiti to take advantage of the benefits that the HOPE II legislation, passed last year by the United States Congress, can bring. As the Secretary-General has noted, HOPE II opens up "a huge window of opportunity" for Haitian access to United States

markets. This programme offers Haiti a crucial chance to move beyond assistance to genuine economic growth and, above all, to achieve the job creation that can fuel sustainable development.

The United States congratulates Haitian leaders for their efforts to get their country back on its feet. We recognize the constructive political developments that have taken place since 2006, and we are particularly pleased that opposition leaders are free to express their views. The 19 April Senate elections mark one more step in Haiti's democratic development. These elections must be free, fair and inclusive. We thank MINUSTAH for its continued support of Haiti's electoral process, and we urge the Government of Haiti to intensify its efforts to promote a political dialogue in which all voices can speak and be heard.

Finally, my Government remains firmly committed to MINUSTAH and to Haiti. We urge the Haitian leadership, the United Nations, troop-contributing countries and other parties to deepen our common efforts to support this country in its fragile transition period.

As the Secretary-General rightly noted, Haiti stands at a crossroads, a turning point between risk and renewal. With continued effort from Haiti's leaders, the relentless determination of its remarkable people and enhanced support from the international community, Haiti can move towards lasting security that will sustain itself, towards democracy that grows deeper roots and towards economic progress for all. Haiti will ultimately choose its own way, but we must all do our part to help the Haitian people succeed.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): As this is the first time I am speaking in the Chamber under your presidency, Mr. President, allow me to start by thanking Ambassador Dabbashi and Ambassador Shalgham for their stewardship of the Council this past month, by welcoming you, Sir, for this month and by pledging our support to you in all your endeavours.

Turning to Haiti, we welcome the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/129) and the fact that he and former President Clinton were able to visit. We are also very grateful for all the efforts from the Special Representative, Mr. Hédi Annabi, who has given us such a thorough and comprehensive briefing today.

We concur with the Secretary-General's assessment, and, I think, the emerging assessment from this Council, that there have been some very positive advances. However, sadly, overall progress has fallen short of that which we had hoped to see. In part, this can be attributed to the devastating blows dealt by the hurricanes and tropical storms of August and September 2008. We hope that, with the support of the international community, the efforts of the Government that were so seriously undermined by these calamities will be pursued with new vigour.

The installation of the new Government and the appointment of Prime Minister Pierre-Louis in September was an important step forward. It offers the potential for much-needed progress in a number of areas. We urge the Haitian authorities to seize the opportunity and to continue their work proactively and constructively to address the constitutional, legislative and budgetary issues that are currently preventing progress in key sectors. We also strongly encourage the authorities to use the expertise offered by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and other agencies on the ground to take early and concrete steps in the key areas.

As other speakers have noted, securing lasting stability in Haiti depends ultimately on socio-economic development. As the Secretary-General says in his report, the current levels of poverty are incompatible with long-term stability. Cooperation with the international community is an essential part of making progress in this area. At the same time, we do need to recognize that it is not the role of MINUSTAH to deliver development, and that the lead must therefore be taken by other actors and organizations based on a sensible division of labour, no duplication, and proper coordination.

Lasting stability does, however, depend very heavily on security, and I would like to take this opportunity to put on record our admiration for the work of the outgoing Force Commander, Major-General Dos Santos Cruz. During his time in Haiti we have seen a significant improvement in the security situation. The re-establishment of government control in former no-go areas is a particularly significant achievement.

MINUSTAH, under the Special Representative's able leadership, plays a significant role in the daily life of Haiti, and we acknowledge the Mission's support to

the efforts of the Government. For the time being, the presence of MINUSTAH remains essential to the maintenance of security and stability. But it is also our overall objective to ultimately enable the Haitian authorities to assume responsibility for their own security. We urge MINUSTAH to continue to monitor and measures its progress against the existing benchmarks. This is vital to measuring progress in Haiti overall and achieving greater mission efficiency, and it is the only way that we can sensibly and carefully plan the next step. We look forward to reviewing progress against those benchmarks in six months' time.

I would like to take this opportunity, however, to welcome the progress made in improving the capacity of the Haitian National Police. It is important, in our view, that the pace of recruitment and training is maintained and, where possible, accelerated.

The approaching Washington donor conference represents an important opportunity to underline that the international community needs to help the people of Haiti to stand on their own feet. We encourage all those involved to improve the engagement between the Haitian leadership and the international community on aid issues. Our objective will rightly be to secure a reliable flow of funding to Haiti. But it is also important that donors be coordinated and that assistance be well organized and targeted at priority sectors.

Let me conclude by repeating our thanks to Special Representative Annabi and his entire team in MINUSTAH. We express our hope that he will pass on our thanks to the team. We also fervently hope that his assessment of an imminent turning point is fulfilled. We will work in the Council and with him to help bring that about.

Mr. Mugoya (Uganda): I wish to start by thanking Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), for his briefing.

Members may recall that the Security Council visited Haiti from 11 to 14 March, following the Secretary-General's visit to that country. The visit of the Security Council to Haiti was useful in enabling the Council to have an on-the-spot assessment of the situation on the ground and to appreciate the challenges being faced in that country. More so, the

visit reassured the people of Haiti that the international community supports their efforts and further cemented the good working relationship between the United Nations and the people of Haiti.

On that note, we commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his staff for the work done in delivering on MINUSTAH's mandates. We also commend the Government and the people of Haiti for their efforts to achieve sustainable and durable development.

We note the progress that has been made so far with regard to the security situation in Haiti. It is encouraging that that has been achieved not only by strengthening the Haitian National Police but also by improving the close working relationship between it and MINUSTAH. We therefore commend MINUSTAH, together with the Haitian National Police, for its contribution to dismantling the armed gangs responsible for much of the violence, in particular in Cité Soleil. That has significantly reduced criminal activity, such as kidnappings, and has helped to restore a degree of public confidence.

Notwithstanding that progress, my delegation is concerned about the continued threat to the overall stability of Haiti posed by organized crime and drug trafficking, which have had an adverse impact on stability, governance and development. In that regard, we urge development partners, the Group of Friends of Haiti and the international community as a whole to intensify efforts geared towards strengthening the capacity of the Government of Haiti to control its borders.

Uganda appreciates the assistance provided by the United Nations for Haiti's senatorial elections scheduled for 19 April. The printing of ballot papers and training of electoral workers, as well as the ongoing dispatch of 12,000 electoral kits to voting centres by the United Nations, are commendable. However, we are concerned about the apparent political tensions between contending parties, specifically the banning by the Provisional Electoral Council of candidates from the rebel faction Fanmi Lavalas. We call upon the authorities in Haiti to go the extra mile in order to ensure that free, fair and all-inclusive elections are held — and on time. Such elections would be a cornerstone for reconciliation and democracy. Every effort should therefore be made to take advantage of the apparent readiness of the executive branch,

parliament, political parties and civil society to engage in constructive dialogue in order to lay the foundations for Haiti's long-term stability and development.

We welcome the efforts being made by the Government of Haiti, with the support of the international community, in the areas of recovery and development and to strengthen key institutions of Government, such as strengthening the customs department in order to increase revenue collections. That improvement is increasingly generating revenue that will enable the Government of Haiti to sustain institutions and provide essential services to its people.

However, the challenges remain immense. We call upon development partners and the entire international community to support the immediate development needs of Haiti, but especially to support the longer-term development needs of the country in order to facilitate sustainable peace and development. We urge all to participate in the donor conference scheduled to be held in Washington on 13 and 14 April of this year.

The hurricanes that hit Haiti in September devastated the country and had a heavy impact on the populations. We commend MINUSTAH and the humanitarian agencies that came to the assistance of Haiti. We also commend the people and the Government of Haiti for their resilience under very difficult circumstances.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We are certain that you will conduct our work effectively. We look forward to working and cooperating with you this month.

I would also like to thank colleagues who took the floor before me for their kind words addressed to my delegation. I also wish to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive and significant briefing. We commend the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for its efforts, under his leadership, to establish security in Haiti.

Haiti has long been one of the most important items on the agenda of the Security Council. It remains on the agenda because Haiti has yet to recover from conflict. The security situation continues to be fragile.

The economic and social fabric has been destroyed by hurricanes and other natural disasters, which have produced enormous financial losses and affected the living conditions of most of the people of Haiti. This requires a coordinated effort by the international community to promote development and economic progress, which are crucial to stability and the building of peace in Haiti. However, that can be achieved only through a clear development strategy, to be established by the Government of Haiti and implemented with the support of its international partners.

We have taken note of positive developments and the steps taken by the Government, including its call for national reconciliation and dialogue, its efforts to expand State administration throughout the country and its joint legislative agenda for 2009. We also welcome the ongoing improvements in the security situation and the work of the Haitian National Police, as well as the decline in criminal activity, in particular kidnappings. We commend coordinated efforts by the Government and the National Police to establish a stable environment where overall security and political progress can flourish.

We agree with the Secretary-General that there have been encouraging developments, but these remain fragile and liable to be reversed. That is why we are concerned at the continuing political divisions. We call upon the Government of Haiti and all political leaders to come together, in particular with respect to their dispute on reform of the 1887 constitution, through dialogue and reconciliation, and to take the constructive path of cooperation. We hope that the first round of senatorial elections, to be held on 19 April, will be successful.

We know that the series of destructive hurricanes and tropical storms that recently struck Haiti created enormous difficulties for Haitians and added to the economic and social burden borne by the Government. We saw this during our visit to Haiti: everyone the Security Council mission met made it clear to us that security and economic development are indivisible. For that reason, all Haitian elements and Government institutions should coordinate, with the support of the international community, so that Haiti can meet the challenges it faces both in the security sphere and in the economic and social realm.

In our view, it is important that the proposals outlined by Professor Paul Collier with respect to

poverty reduction and the long-term economic recovery of Haiti be accorded due attention with a view to making economic progress. In that regard, we believe that Haiti's neighbours and the other countries of the region can play an important role, in parallel with the efforts of the international community, donor countries and the United Nations country team, in improving economic and social conditions for the people. This is closely linked with the achievement of sustainable stability in the country.

We agree with the Secretary-General that assistance will be effective only if the Haitians themselves face the long-term challenges with the same spirit and determination they have shown in the aftermath of last year's destructive hurricanes and tropical storms. We hope that the Washington donor conference will be successful and will yield the financial assistance that is needed.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset, Sir, to offer my sincere congratulations to you and your team on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April; I assure you of our full cooperation. I wish also to congratulate Ambassador Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalgham and the entire delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on their excellent presidency last month.

My thanks also go to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, for his briefing this morning.

When the Council discussed the situation in Haiti on 12 September 2008, that country was suffering major damage caused by the hurricanes and floods of August and September. Still today, as confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/129), the unfortunate fact is that, despite some progress, the overall situation in Haiti continues to be of concern because of the fragility of State institutions and the security system, in addition to economic problems. But it must be recognized that the overall political climate has improved considerably, even though divisions and tensions remain among political parties.

Political stability is crucial for Haiti, in particular given the major political milestones of the coming two years, including the holding of senatorial, legislative, local and presidential elections and constitutional reform. All political actors and civil society therefore have the duty to everything possible to establish a

climate of peace through inclusive dialogue. To help them in that task, the Government must put in place the conditions necessary for the efficient planning of those elections, especially by ensuring security, freedom, democracy and transparency.

In the security sphere, we welcome the dismantling of a number of armed gangs and a reduction in the number of crimes, in particular kidnappings. Here, we welcome the enormous support provided by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which has contributed to the restoration and reform of the Haitian National Police. But even in the light of these achievements, current police staffing at all levels is insufficient to maintain stability. Indeed, during its recent visit to Haiti, the Security Council observed that the Haitian National Police had insufficient qualified personnel and equipment to monitor and control the borders. This significantly reduces the effectiveness of efforts to combat the drugs trade, which is considerable. The international community, and in particular the United Nations, should provide MINUSTAH with adequate resources, enabling it to continue its programme and meet the target of 14,000 trained police officers by 2011.

The restoration of State authority, the rule of law and respect for human rights cannot be achieved without far-reaching justice system reform. We therefore encourage the Government to continue its justice system reform plan. Here, we welcome the 12 March reopening of Haiti's *École de la magistrature*.

On the economic, social and humanitarian situation, as confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General, the disasters of 2008 deeply affected Haiti both in human terms and in terms of the socio-economic infrastructure. This is a grave burden for a country the majority of whose population lives below the poverty line and which was in addition hit hard by unprecedented food and economic crises.

To be sure, economic recovery is first and foremost the responsibility of the Government and the people of Haiti. But it is true that this requires major financial resources that the State alone cannot provide. We therefore appeal to the international community, in particular donor countries, and to the Haitian private sector to support the Government, in particular through job creation.

The initiative to convene a high-level donor conference in Washington later this month comes at the right moment. We hope it will yield major, urgent decisions that can help Haiti address its pressing humanitarian needs and pursue economic recovery.

My delegation wishes to state its satisfaction and reaffirm its encouragement for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the personnel of MINUSTAH for the important work they are doing in Haiti, in often difficult conditions. We urge the Security Council to support them in their mission and invite the countries of the region to cooperate closely with MINUSTAH, in particular in the sphere of border control.

We thank the countries that contribute troops to MINUSTAH for their efforts and call on them to maintain their involvement in helping Haiti to establish lasting stability to the benefit of all, particularly the countries of the region. We call on all States to do their utmost to honour their pledged contributions to MINUSTAH. We also call on the Government of Haiti to enhance good governance so that the country can enjoy the confidence and support of the international community.

In conclusion, we thank the United States and Mexico for having prepared the draft presidential statement, which, of course, enjoys our full support.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): I should like to start by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I also congratulate the Permanent Representative of Libya on having successfully completed the March presidency of the Council.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his briefing today and for his continuous and tireless efforts for the stabilization of Haiti at the head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Today's open debate is indeed timely, considering that the Security Council has just come back from Haiti and that the first round of partial senatorial elections will be held in two weeks. Having mentioned our trip to Haiti, I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Haiti for the hospitality we enjoyed in his country and the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica for having organized the Security Council mission in such an efficient manner.

Turkey attaches great importance to stability in Haiti and fully supports MINUSTAH. We have contributed to MINUSTAH since its inception, and we will soon have another group of Turkish police officers joining the group already in Haiti. These additional Turkish police officers will serve alongside the troops and police officers of other contributors in these difficult times in Haiti.

We hope that the upcoming partial senatorial elections will not have a destabilizing effect, but will make a contribution to enhancing institutional effectiveness in Haiti. As outlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/129), the readiness of the Haitian political leadership to work together, especially in dealing with the aftermath of the devastating hurricanes, was a clearly encouraging sign. This state of mind should prevail not only in times of natural catastrophe, but also in trying to solve the daily problems of the Haitians.

In that context, the United Nations, and MINUSTAH in particular, should remain vigilant, as we witnessed during our stay that the underlying causes of instability in Haiti — extreme poverty and the precarious socio-economic environment — are unfortunately still prevalent. We therefore join in the Secretary-General's call to the Haitian leadership and people to maintain the spirit of consensus and cooperation, as well as the political collaboration and dialogue shown after the hurricanes.

In this sense, the fairness, transparency and inclusiveness of the upcoming senatorial elections, as well as of State mechanisms in general, will be of great importance. On the other hand, the international community and MINUSTAH should keep helping and supporting Haiti in these endeavours. In this regard, the donor conference to be held in Washington, D.C., will be of outmost importance in showing the determination of the international community to assist Haiti, and will certainly help MINUSTAH to carry out its duties.

The progress achieved by the Haitian National Police in fully assuming its responsibilities, the post-election political climate and any eventual improvement in the socio-economic situation could, among other parameters, guide our future assessment of the gradual drawdown of MINUSTAH. Meanwhile, beyond any conceptual debate about the definition of the nature of its mandate, MINUSTAH should definitely remain in Haiti for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Skračić (Croatia): Croatia would like to join others in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his briefing and insightful comments. Allow me from the outset to take this opportunity to commend both Mr. Annabi and the civil and military components of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) on the tremendous work they have undertaken in the overall stabilization of Haiti.

I would also like to welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Haiti and thank him and his Government for the hospitality provided to Council members during our recent visit to Haiti, headed by Ambassador Jorge Urbina of Costa Rica.

Croatia has aligned itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

Croatia believes that political stability in Haiti is a prerequisite for any long-lasting solution in that country. When we last met here to discuss this issue in October 2008, we welcomed the formation of a new Haitian Government under the strong leadership of Prime Minister Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis, who, together with President Préval, was immediately set the difficult task of trying to bridge the gap between the executive and legislative branches. It was encouraging that, during the Council's visit to Haiti last month, many interlocutors in the Government and the Parliament, as well as in civil society and the private sector, expressed genuine willingness to overcome existing divisions in order to work on issues of crucial importance to the future of the country. We welcome that encouraging sign of readiness to work together for the common good, especially on those issues of indisputable importance to Haiti, such as customs and policing, the strengthening of the rule of law, constitutional reform, education, socio-economic development and investment.

The first real litmus test for the political cohesiveness of Haiti will come in a few short days' time with the 19 April elections for one third of the country's Senate. Despite the short-term risk of further political tension, it is our understanding that these senatorial elections will be of crucial importance to any planned discussions on constitutional reform and needed improvements to Haiti's democratic institutions, since without the elections of those senators the Senate will continue to lack the numbers

required for successfully promulgating the required reforms. The senatorial elections are also important if the timetable for further senatorial and other elections in the country, scheduled for 2009, is to be kept. We welcome the readiness of the Government and the Provisional Electoral Council to fulfil that goal, as well as the Electoral Council's commitment to ensuring that all elections are free, fair, inclusive and held on time.

Naturally, political stability goes hand in hand with physical security. We are encouraged by the steady recruitment and strengthening professionalism of the Haitian National Police (HNP), whose numbers have now increased to just over 9,000 officers, constituting two thirds of the 14,000 officers foreseen to be recruited by 2011. While these officers may not yet be in a position by themselves to face the many challenges to Haiti's stability, for which they have the able and robust support of MINUSTAH, we do believe that they are on the right track to achieving just that. Strengthened public confidence in the HNP is also a good sign. We hope that, with MINUSTAH's assistance, the HNP will be better able to address such burning issues as drug trafficking and organized crime, including kidnappings, which are recognized threats to Haiti's stability and development.

That also holds true for the work that needs to be done on effectively managing and controlling Haiti's borders in general, which seriously lack even the most basic infrastructure and equipment. Regional partners could contribute to greater stability in this area by complementing the Mission's enhanced land and maritime patrolling duties with more bilateral border cooperation. More importantly, the next six months will serve as an important test as to whether the Haitian authorities have met prerequisite stabilization benchmarks prior to the expiration of the Mission's current mandate in October.

Judicial reform is another important step in strengthening the rule of law in Haiti, which in turn is a requirement for socio-economic development. Croatia welcomes the inauguration of the School of Magistrates on 12 March, which we had the honour to witness. We look forward to the successful implementation of the national plan for justice reform, as well as the speedy establishment of the Superior Council of the Judiciary. Here, Croatia also believes that the continuing support of MINUSTAH towards strengthening administrative and Government

capacities to ensure further Government reform efforts is vital to the long-term stability of Haiti.

One of the most important tasks remaining before the Government of Haiti is socio-economic development. The reduction of poverty, the promotion of development and food security, the environment and job creation are all national priorities. While there is broad consensus among national stakeholders, including in the private sector, that the Government should take the lead in promoting these priorities, we regret that the Government has yet to produce a focused action plan outlining the country's priorities in this regard.

Taking in the lessons from the devastating hurricanes of 2008 and the fragile stability of Haiti, where one third of the population is still dependant on emergency aid, we sincerely hope that the Government will take this into consideration so that the gains being made towards consolidation on the security front will not be jeopardized by lack of progress in socio-economic development or by renewed natural disasters.

Finally, we hope that international assistance for Haiti, including at the upcoming donor conference planned in Washington, D.C., will make a difference for Haiti's future by addressing possible shortfalls so that the pitfalls of destabilization in the country can be avoided. We welcome the recent visit by the Secretary-General and former United States President Clinton in order to throw the spotlight on Haiti's needs and to demonstrate the international community's solidarity.

The role of the donor community is of particular importance, given the extremely worrisome economic and social statistics in Haiti, as personified by the 3 million people threatened with food insecurity. It is our hope that the international response will lead to the establishment of a genuine and coherent compact geared towards developmental projects and investments that will carefully balance the essence of national ownership with an integrated stabilization process.

The Haitian Government, for its part, needs to seize on this opportunity by continuing to embrace a collaborative and inclusive approach in steering its country towards long-term economic security. The Government needs to support international partners by removing obstacles to private investment, including, but not limited to, establishing an interministerial committee on land management, drafting a new law on

co-ownership and identifying State-owned land for the establishment of possible export zones.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on acceding to the important functions of President of the Security Council. I would also like to thank the delegation of Libya for its effective work in the Chair last month. We wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for the substantive briefing on recent events in Haiti and for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2009/129). We agree with the basic assessment and the recommendations contained in the report.

The year 2008 was one of serious ordeals for the Haitian people. There were hunger riots, which were followed by a heightened Government crisis. There were destructive tropical storms that claimed the lives of some 800 people and caused great economic losses. In total, around 800,000 people suffered from natural disasters.

The destructive global crisis has aggravated an already difficult socio-economic situation for Haitian people. In March this year a Security Council mission went to Haiti. Its purpose was to express support to the people and Government of that country in overcoming the challenges facing them and also to reassert the willingness of the international community to continue providing assistance to the Haitian people in terms of establishing peace and security. We commend also the recent visit to Haiti by the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, accompanied by the former President of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton.

It is important that the people of Haiti do everything possible to achieve national unity and reconciliation and have a broad political dialogue establishing effective cooperation between all branches of government. We support the combined plan of progress indicators prepared by the Secretary-General for Haiti for the period 2008 to 2011. We are convinced that the implementation of that plan will facilitate gradual progress in working on the priority areas for Haiti.

We express our support for MINUSTAH, which is playing an important role in supporting law and order in the country. United Nations peacekeepers helped re-establish control in Haiti during the unrest in April

and also provided comprehensive support to Haitian people in mitigating the consequences of the hurricanes. Here, we wish to express to the Head of MINUSTAH, Mr. Hédi Annabi, and all his staff our gratitude for their professionalism and selfless efforts in providing help to Haiti.

We should note the good degree of cooperation being established between the Mission and the law enforcement bodies in the country. United Nations peacekeepers and Haitian police officers are working closely together in protecting maritime and land borders and in fighting criminal groups. It is our hope that States of that region will support Haiti in dealing with and counteracting cross-border crime. Urgent measures must now be taken to improve the situation with regard to human rights, fight corruption and reform the justice and corrections system.

One important element in the work of MINUSTAH is to help Haiti to re-establish and reform security bodies. We hope that the planned gradual increase in the staff levels in the National Police will make it possible to begin the gradual transfer of responsibility to Haitian police. The main responsibility for establishing peace and security in Haiti lies with the country's Government and people. However, they continue to need international assistance. Therefore, we supported the extension of MINUSTAH's mandate until October 2009. The MINUSTAH police component includes Russian officers and citizens.

We welcome the considerable contribution of regional organizations of Latin America and countries of the Caribbean in providing comprehensive support to the Haitian people. We consider the high-level donor conference for Haiti, planned for Washington on 14 April, to be very important. The Russian Federation will continue to support the people and Government of Haiti in building an independent, stable and democratic State.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): Allow me first of all, Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation, to extend to you and the Mexican delegation our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month. You can rest assured of my delegation's full cooperation. I also wish to extend warm congratulations to Ambassador Dabbashi and Ambassador Shalgham and the Libyan delegation for effectively leading the work of the Council last month.

I join others in extending to the Government of Haiti our deep gratitude for the cooperation and hospitality offered the Council mission in March.

I thank the Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his detailed briefing before the Council today. The report on the recent Security Council mission to Haiti and the report of the Secretary-General on MINUSTAH (S/2009/129) present a comprehensive picture of the situation on the ground.

My delegation is encouraged by incremental advances in four of the five benchmarks that are significant parts of a *sine qua non* for the achievement of political stability and security in Haiti. We note with appreciation indications of renewed readiness among the country's political leaders to work together to address a series of consequences of the four devastating hurricanes, which are being aggravated by the global food and financial crisis and, more recently, by re-ignited tensions related to the upcoming partial senatorial elections.

However, without social and economic development, the progress thus far recorded in the four benchmarks will remain fragile. It is imperative for the Haitian Government, in coordination with MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team, to act simultaneously on all political, security and socio-economic fronts.

On the political and security front, there is an urgent need, on the one hand, to promote national consensus to ensure stability and, on the other, to continue to move forward with programmes on security sector reform and institutional capacity-building. The violence in Port-au-Prince and some other cities last April and the increased trafficking in drugs and weapons throughout the country clearly show that the Haitian National Police must be further reinforced if they are to be capable of maintaining public order and responding to threats to the country's stability and security.

In the socio-economic field, consequences of the natural catastrophes that hit the country severely in 2008, coupled with inherent economic problems, have not only worsened the already dire economic conditions for a large majority of Haitians, but have also hindered the full implementation of the Government's strategy and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. At this critical

juncture, we hold that the full engagement of the Haitian leadership and people and the execution of a sound and comprehensive socio-economic strategy which seeks to mobilize domestic resources, generate growth, create employment, reduce poverty and improve living conditions are of paramount importance to Haiti.

We welcome the efforts undertaken by the Core Group to continue to support development projects in Haiti through bilateral and multilateral partnerships. We commend the continued involvement of regional and subregional stakeholders, such as the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community, in assisting Haiti to stimulate its economy and achieve long-term security. We appreciate the initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank to convene an international donor conference for Haiti this month in Washington, D.C., and look forward to the success of the event.

At the same time, we wish to emphasize that, in seeking to ensure Haiti's durable peace, security, stability and sustainable development, international involvement in Haiti can be successful only when it has full Haitian engagement at all stages of the process with a view to ensuring that, finally and soon Haitians, will be able to run their own country.

In conclusion, we recognize the enduring efforts of the MINUSTAH leadership and staff to provide extensive assistance to the Haitian authorities in many areas ranging from institutional support, the strengthening of the State, border management and the rule of law to humanitarian relief and development activities. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that, while the Haitian National Police is still developing the capacity to better its performance, MINUSTAH should continue to play a critical role in helping maintain stability and security in Haiti as well as in the country's political reconciliation process.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): Let me join others in congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the Security Council presidency and in thanking the Libyan presidency for the month of the March for the work done.

We thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his detailed briefing and his mission's ongoing efforts to contribute to peace and stability in Haiti. Austria

wishes to align itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

Austria commends the progress made in terms of the political situation following the successful organization of presidential elections and the establishment of Haiti's Government in 2006. Significant advances have been made in the fields of political dialogue as well as the extension of State authority. In order to further those positive developments, it remains vital for the Government to continue its dialogue with all relevant actors, including political parties, the private sector as well as civil society.

Austria welcomes the significant improvements made in the rule of law sector. Due to the important role played by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the gradual strengthening of the Haitian National Police, security has improved throughout Haiti. That coordination has greatly contributed to the decline in violence and criminal activity in the country. Austria therefore believes that the enhancement and continued vetting of the Haitian National Police remain key prerequisites for Haiti's stability and security.

We are pleased to note the progress made in the organization of the judiciary through the implementation of respective legal instruments, yet further advancement of stability in Haiti will also depend on promoting the other pillars of the rule of law system. We are concerned about the challenges faced by the Haitian judiciary in conducting and completing proceedings in an expeditious manner. That has resulted in a dramatic rise in the prison population under very difficult conditions. We welcome the launch of the working group on the reform of the judiciary and hope that it will help to accelerate the judicial reform process.

With regard to juvenile justice, more reform efforts are needed. Austria has been actively involved in the elaboration of a juvenile law code, which is a prerequisite for a comprehensive child protection system, and encourages the Haitian Government to further continue its work in that regard.

Another element of vital importance to further stabilize Haiti's political situation and to improve the functioning of its democratic institutions will be constitutional reform, which should bring about better

governance in Haiti. We recognize the tight schedule that Haiti faces and encourage the country's political leaders to achieve the necessary consensus.

In that context, the successful holding of the upcoming elections for the renewal of one third of the Senate is of great importance and a prerequisite for the necessary constitutional reform. Every effort must be taken to ensure that the election process be free, fair and inclusive.

The economic and social situation in Haiti remains precarious due to the devastation caused by last year's hurricanes and the global economic crisis. Daily living conditions have deteriorated. Poverty and food security remain issues of great concern. In that respect, the adoption of agricultural policies aimed at boosting production and continued efforts to implement a reconstruction and development strategy will constitute significant contributions towards ameliorating the socio-economic climate in Haiti.

Austria believes that regional cooperation and partnership contribute substantively to the effectiveness of MINUSTAH. In that context, Austria welcomes the strong Latin American and Caribbean participation and ownership in MINUSTAH. Through the engagement of regional organizations, such as the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community, Haiti's integration into the region is ensured. The substantial progress achieved by MINUSTAH with regard to the security situation in Haiti underlines the benefits to peacekeeping drawn from troop and police contributions by regional actors.

Finally, let me stress the importance of efficiently using the momentum for further positive development in Haiti. On his recent visit to Haiti, the Secretary-General underlined that Haiti and the international community were presented with a window of opportunity to enhance the situation in the country. In that regard, the upcoming international donor conference in Washington, D.C. is an opportunity for Haiti to gain access to supplementary funds in order to continue its peace and stabilization process.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation congratulates the Mexican delegation on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for April and commends the Libyan delegation for its outstanding work last month. We thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing and also welcome

the 6 March 2009 report (S/2009/129) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

We note that there has been some general improvement in the security situation on the ground and that some progress has been made in implementing the five benchmarks for the consolidation of stability process in Haiti. However, as pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General and the report of the Security Council mission to Haiti, the situation remains fragile. Such problems as poverty, unemployment and food insecurity still jeopardize achieving lasting stability in the country.

We hope that the Haitian Government, with the assistance of the international community, will enhance its capacity through measures such as restructuring national institutions, enhancing police capacity and border control, developing legislation, promoting judicial reform and prison management and making greater efforts to fight corruption. To that end, the Haitian Government, Parliament, the political parties, the private sector and civil society should intensify political dialogue and coordination among themselves to strive for long-term stability and development.

We call on all parties in Haiti to demonstrate the political will to ensure that the upcoming senatorial elections are free, fair and inclusive. Over the years, MINUSTAH has played a crucial role in guaranteeing stability in the country and we will continue to support the Mission. To achieve lasting security and stability in Haiti, we must rely first and foremost on the Government and the people of Haiti. We also encourage the international community to continue to support Haiti in achieving national reconstruction and socio-economic development. We look forward to the positive outcome of the Washington donor conference, to be held on 14 April.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): In taking the floor for the first time at a Council meeting under your presidency, Sir, I would like to congratulate you and your delegation. I am sure that your abilities and leadership will ensure the necessary guidance for the success of our work. I also thank Ambassador Shalgham, Ambassador Dabbashi and the delegation of Libya for their commendable work in the Council presidency for the month of March. I welcome the presence among us of the Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Ambassador

Ramdin, and of Ambassador Mérorès, the Permanent Representative of Haiti.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2009/129) and his Special Representative, our friend Hédi Annabi, whom I thank for his work as Head of MINUSTAH and ask to convey our gratitude to the whole Mission. I would also like to thank him for his support during the Council's visit to Haiti.

My delegation believes that Haiti offers a significant opportunity for success and a valuable chance to learn for the United Nations. It is a novel and complex case on account of the challenges that it poses and the tasks that it entails. As a result of the growing number of peacekeeping operations, the limited economic and human resources available and the complex multidimensional challenges that we face, the Assembly, the Secretary-General and this Council have been discussing peacekeeping operations. In that context, Haiti emerges as a bridge that should help us to better understand the role of the international community in building a world free from want and also free from fear.

My delegation believes that MINUSTAH is doing all that is necessary to help Haiti in its struggle for stability and economic and social development. But, in our opinion, the Government of Haiti and the Stabilization Mission do not seem to be combining actions in such a way as to guarantee the sustainability of the progress achieved. And the Council knows full well that actions of the international community that have not been sustainable in the past have time and time again forced Haiti to return to battles considered already won.

How can we not acknowledge the significant progress in security? Who could deny the importance of improving control of a territory used by drug traffickers, a vulnerable border or territorial waters used for illegal purposes? How can we deny the value of institutional development in administering justice? Who could not be aware of the beneficial work to reduce the risks and to increase the ability to deal with natural disasters? How can we object to the importance of legislation and robust electoral institutions that guarantee the vote, if we aspire to a political democracy?

I could continue with a long list of questions that justify everything that is being done in Haiti with the assistance of MINUSTAH, but we believe that the fundamental, and most important, questions still have not been definitively answered. How much of what has been achieved can be preserved if international cooperation is reduced? Will the achievements in security be maintained? Will the Haitian Government be able to keep a 14,000-strong police force properly equipped and free from corruption? Who will build the necessary infrastructure for the justice institutions? Where will the salaries and equipment necessary for its operation come from without international assistance? Could Haiti organize the eight electoral processes that its laws require in the next thirty-six months?

We believe that the problem of sustaining what has been achieved and what is being built is the major challenge that we, the international community and Haiti, face together. The lack of economic and social development is still the greatest challenge of the Haitian society and one where the assistance of the international community has brought about only very limited progress. Even though it is true that there have been positive growth rates in recent years, it is also true that they were limited. A society as poor as Haiti's should grow at significantly higher rates.

Costa Rica believes that the ultimate responsibility for sustainable peace and development lies with the Haitian people and their political, economic and cultural leaders. They are at the vanguard that has the primary obligation to lead the whole nation to higher levels of progress. The Government of Haiti, under the leadership of President Préval and Prime Minister Pierre-Louis, the parliamentary authorities and the political parties must comply with their responsibilities in building a political and institutional environment that fosters modernization and development. The Haitian political system cannot continue to be the factor that limits and delays the country's progress. All political actors, including civil society, have endorsed their commitment to the process that Haiti is undergoing today.

With the support of the international community, the Haitian State must move forward in providing basic services, in particular health and education, as well as environmental rehabilitation. We await swift institutional reform and the simplification of a costly electoral calendar that is also a destabilizing factor. We

trust that soon the laws will be reformed to facilitate the participation of the valuable Haitian diaspora in the development of their country and to allow for a more dynamic role for foreign investment in Haiti.

Development in Haiti also depends on economic actors. With the necessary conditions for investment, Haitian entrepreneurs — those who live in the country and those who maintain links with their native land — must embark on the path to economic modernization. Agriculture, the basis of the Haitian economy today, must overcome its stagnation and very low levels of productivity, moving towards the goal of food security. A national development strategy for human capital is needed. The young and abundant work force needs training and employment before it falls into despair and fuels instability in the country once again.

Next week's donor conference must be firmly focused on economic and social development and on ensuring the sustainability of the progress made. In Haiti today, there are all the ingredients for success and learning. For the Haitian people, the international community's assistance is an opportunity to overcome old ills that have hampered their development. For the international community, Haiti is an opportunity to learn to work on the many aspects of complex situations, making sustainable peace and development possible for the many millions of human beings still living in despair throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Mexico.

I thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/129). My delegation wishes to express its appreciation for his commendable work as head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and to thank him for his very valuable observations today.

We welcome the presence of our colleague Ambassador Léo Mérorès, Permanent Representative of Haiti. In addition, I welcome the representatives of international institutions, bodies and agencies of the system, whose work is extremely important for Haiti's present and future: the Economic and Social Council, the Organization of American States, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme, the World Bank, the International

Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank, whose representatives are joining us today.

For my country, this debate is particularly important, as it reflects the Security Council's clear commitment to the political stability, reconstruction and development of Haiti. That country is a clear example of the vital comprehensive attention that should be given to many of the crisis situations on our agenda, which go beyond the strict notion of maintaining international peace and security. Given the unfavourable global environment, they are crisis situations to which we must become accustomed.

Mexico welcomes the international community's increasing attention to the situation in Haiti. That was demonstrated by the recent visits of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Security Council mission to renew the Organization's commitment to and support for the stability of the country. We are grateful for the support received on that occasion from Haitian authorities and institutions and from Haitian society in general.

We hope that this debate will truly help to promote greater interest and commitment on the part of the international community at the Washington donor conference to be held on 14 April, which will be a crucial event for the country's future.

Mexico welcomes the progress made in Haiti in such areas as the political-electoral sphere, institutional strengthening, security, the rule of law and human rights. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that that progress is still fragile and that its sustainability depends largely on progress regarding the socio-economic situation of the Haitian people.

Like other delegations, we urge the Government and the society of Haiti to make every effort to ensure that the forthcoming electoral process to fill vacant Senate seats, to be carried out on 19 April, will be a democratic, participatory and inclusive exercise. The assistance of MINUSTAH will be decisive in attaining that objective. To support the holding of those elections, my country recently delivered to Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council electoral material for organizing and developing the elections — ballot boxes, booths and office furniture — which will be distributed at the voting centres established in the 17 regional departments.

Mexico believes that a priority task for MINUSTAH is to train the Haitian National Police. That is a crucial factor if we are to foster an atmosphere of security for the country's population and guarantee stability throughout the national territory. That is why Mexico welcomes the fact that such training is in keeping with the objectives set by the Mission. Likewise, my country is pleased to have been able to contribute to the strengthening of the Haitian Police through anti-kidnapping training programmes.

Haiti's economic and social situation requires the cooperation of the international community as never before. The efforts made to date, both bilaterally and by the donor community through various multilateral forums, have fallen short in contributing to a long-term solution to the problems related to the country's growth and social development.

Therefore, it is urgent that a new alliance be forged between Haiti and the international community. The new arrangement must be based on mutual commitments. On the one hand, national institutions must guarantee to the Haitian people access to basic services, to the rule of law and to democratic governance; on the other, the international community must respond more decisively, both in terms of emergency and humanitarian aid and in terms of cooperation, to meet the enormous needs of the Haitian people.

The Government of Mexico will, to the best of its abilities, decisively join in efforts to help strengthen the health, energy, security, education and agriculture sectors. In addition, we will enhance our humanitarian aid programmes by dispatching medicine and food. I am pleased to announce the Government of Mexico's decision to create the Mexico-Haiti Fund in order to resolve the implementation of bilateral technical cooperation and humanitarian aid projects, which we will explain in detail at the donor conference to be held in Washington on 14 April.

Finally, I should like to acknowledge the countries — many of which are represented here today — that have actively contributed to the well-being of the Haitian people. I appeal to the international community to continue to support peace, security and development in Haiti.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on Ms Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, who will speak in her capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council.

Ms. Lucas (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to participate, in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, in this Security Council debate on Haiti.

As has already been said several times this morning, Haiti is at a crucial moment. Since the new Government came to power, some progress has been made: public security is being better guaranteed; considerable efforts are being made to establish administrations and institutions that can strengthen the rule of law; and the country is embarking on the path of effective governance in order to combat poverty and mobilize the country's human potential. However, 2008, with its food and fuel crises and its hurricanes and tropical storms, seriously affected the country, which experienced a decline of 15 per cent — or nearly \$900 million — in its gross domestic product.

How, in that context, can we not fear a new destabilization and a resurgence of political violence? Indeed, the correlations between socio-economic development and political stability need no further demonstration. Only the implementation of a reconstruction and development strategy by the Haitian authorities, with the strong support of the donor community, will allow us to make the stability long-lasting. It is therefore vital that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council work together to support that country in meeting these challenges.

Haiti has been on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council for 10 years. Its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, established in 1999 to draft recommendations for the long-term development of Haiti, was relaunched in November 2004. In its most recent report to the States members of the Economic and Social Council in July 2008, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group noted the economic, social and political instability in Haiti and highlighted the difficulties related to the food and fuel crises that had severely affected the country. It stressed the importance for social and economic stability of jumpstarting the economy, creating jobs, promoting rural development and providing the neediest categories of the population with food and basic services free of charge.

Those recommendations are still valid. It is specifically the progress previously made in these key areas that has been seriously undermined by the crises and natural disasters that took place in 2008, further exacerbating the living conditions of many Haitians.

The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti proposed three groups of recommendations in particular to improve the economic and social situation in Haiti and to enhance the impact of development aid. Amongst these recommendations, we would mention, first, improved development planning and better coordination of international assistance. Donors and partners for Haiti's development should further adjust their programmes to the facts on the ground and align their support with the objectives and strategies formulated by the Haitian authorities, thereby contributing to enhancing national capacities.

In this context, it is urgent and necessary that the donor conference to take place in Washington on 14 April mobilize the international community on behalf of Haiti and contribute to the short-, medium- and long-term development of the country.

The second group of recommendations pertains to capacity-building for Haitian institutions. The importance of stepping up institutional reforms, particularly in the area of justice and the rule of law, as well as in the area of customs and public administration in general, was stressed.

The third group of recommendations focuses on an improved use of what the Group calls the Haitian and international economic and social development levers. It recommends further involvement of the private sector to pull Haiti out of poverty by creating jobs in the structured sector. The Group also insists on the contribution that the Haitian diaspora could make to the development of the country, not only through remittances, but also through its technical skills and knowledge. For their part, donors are called on to contribute to the implementation of the strategy developed within the United Nations system in the short and medium terms.

At its July session, the Economic and Social Council will consider, within the framework of its annual ministerial review, the theme entitled "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health". In this context, it is important to recall that access to health care in Haiti remains very limited and that the

inadequacies in terms of public health, and more generally in terms of basic services, are an obstacle to efforts being made to ensure development and growth.

Bearing mind the stabilizing effect of lasting economic and social development, the international community has the obligation to work in cooperation with the Haitian authorities to develop the country and to work with them over the long term. The Economic and Social Council, particularly through its Ad Hoc Advisory Group, will visit Haiti in May and will continue to be committed in this process and to assist the country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

Mr. Ramdin: First of all, I thank you and the Security Council, Mr. President, for the opportunity provided to the Organization of American States (OAS) to speak at this important meeting on developments in Haiti. Mexico's commitment is a long-standing one, and we thank you very much, as well as other Member States and Permanent Observers of the Organization, for the assistance provided to the OAS over the past year to facilitate our work in Haiti.

This invitation from the Security Council also reaffirms the ongoing strong collaboration between the United Nations and the secretariat of the Organization of American States on the ground in Haiti. Allow me at this point to congratulate Mr. Hédi Annabi on the leadership he has demonstrated in support of Haiti and of the many missions the OAS leadership and the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States have undertaken in the country.

The Republic of Haiti, as we have heard this morning, is at a unique and important juncture in its history. We believe that, since the presidential elections in 2006, Haiti, through the inclusive approach adopted by President René Garcia Préval, has created a relatively stable political environment, and through the efforts of the Haitian National Police and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), has achieved an improved security environment and has been able to develop a social and economic programme for reconstruction, among other positive developments. At the same time, having said this, we must recognize that challenges remain, as ably outlined by the Special Representative this morning.

These important developments, combined with the historic high degree of international and hemispheric solidarity and support, provide, in our view, an appropriate foundation for starting a process of job creation, production, investment and income generation. Whereas in the past the focus has been on the strengthening and maintenance of democracy, the electoral process and stable governance, we believe that the time has come to redirect our collective efforts, with the assistance of the domestic and international private sectors, to create economic opportunities through short-term initiatives and, at the same time, lay the foundations for a structural path of growth and development through investments in education, health, the agricultural sector and natural disaster risk mitigation and risk reduction.

The Organization of American States, based on the priorities established by the Government of Haiti, will continue to work in the area of civil registry, especially the strengthening of the electoral process through the provision of national voter identity cards to more than 95 per cent of the adult population. Through this process, we will lay the foundation for the first-ever modern civil registry in Haiti. We will also continue to support the Provisional Electoral Council during the upcoming partial senatorial elections and in its transformation into a permanent electoral council. We will continue the trade capacity-building that we have started, support recent development and take initiatives in the area of human rights, especially in favour of disabled persons. We will also support the Haitian authorities in terms of the request made by President Préval for constitutional reform, and possibly in specific areas of the reform and strengthening of the judiciary.

In whatever we undertake, the OAS believes that it must include a cross-cutting objective — the strengthening of State institutions and capacity-building in order to execute Haiti's priority reconstruction programme. It is also, in our view, of critical importance the focus on the sustainability of progress, which will enhance confidence among Haitians and the international community, and no doubt lead to more support.

Next week's international donor conference on Haiti in Washington, D.C., with a most encouraging central objective to develop a new cooperation paradigm for growth and opportunity, will be, in our view, an opportune moment to bring all of these

commitments together through the adoption of a framework for cooperation and international partnership for the effective coordination of governance mechanisms. We also believe that we should continue to foster partnership with the private sector in and outside of Haiti, as well as with civil society at large and the Haitian diaspora.

In closing, while the political, social and economic development of Haiti is, in the first place, a Haitian responsibility, we believe that it is also the obligation of the international community to politically and financial accompany the process of dialogue and reconstruction in Haiti.

I therefore take this opportunity, on behalf of Secretary General José Miguel Insulza, to reaffirm the strong commitment and support of the Organization of American States to the Government and the people of the Republic of Haiti in their efforts to continue to strengthen the democratic process and to enhance social and economic development and security for the benefit of the Haitian people.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Pedro Medrano, Director of the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food Programme.

Mr. Medrano: On behalf of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), Josette Sheeran, I would like to start by expressing our sincere gratitude to the Security Council for inviting the World Food Programme to share its views on the challenges and opportunities that the current situation in Haiti is posing to the United Nations family and the international community.

The WFP is convinced that the current levels of poverty, deprivation and suffering, as described in the recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2009/129), are clearly incompatible with the goal of long-term stability. Even without further adverse weather threats, the current state of health and sanitation infrastructure and the continued food insecurity represent tremendous challenges.

As the Council is well aware, approximately 70 per cent of the population has no access to basic health services or sanitary facilities. Half of the population has no access to potable water. Before the most recent series of hurricanes, agricultural production met only

30 to 50 per cent of needs, with most farmers producing enough food for only six to eight months of the year.

The global financial crisis brings the risk of further deterioration due to a decrease in remittances. Recent reports indicate that remittances to Haiti began dropping in January 2009 and that they have now dropped by 10 per cent compared to last year. They also indicate that, on average, 77 per cent of remittances are spent on the basic daily expenses of food, housing, utilities, clothing and medicine. The impact of this downturn in remittances is likely to offset the current decrease in imported food prices, with serious implications for household vulnerability, poverty and hunger.

In 2008, in response to high food prices, natural disasters and extreme poverty, the World Food Programme raised over \$100 million to ensure food assistance for more than 2.5 million people in Haiti. As of now, the number has risen to 2.8 million, who face continued malnutrition and threats to their livelihoods as they remain cut off from roads, markets and access to basic services.

The World Food Programme is restoring key community assets and infrastructure in both rural and urban populations by providing protective nutrition and social and educational interventions for women, children and the most food-insecure. We regard these as safety net measures, which improve nutritional and health status while enhancing access to education and providing livelihood protection for the most vulnerable.

I think that it is very important to highlight the fact that, in order to foster livelihood opportunities in rural areas, the World Food Programme is determined to work with partners to address the many challenges currently limiting the possibility of purchasing the food that is needed for its programmes from local Haitian small farmers.

The upcoming Haiti summit to be held in Washington, D.C., represents a major opportunity to forge a new paradigm in terms of economic and social security. The World Food Programme is committed to the socio-economic stabilization and development of Haiti, within the framework of the poverty reduction strategy paper, the post-disaster needs assessment and the plan that the Government of Haiti will present at the Washington conference.

The World Food Programme, like other United Nations agencies and donors, advocates strongly for a strategy that focuses on ensuring access to jobs and to basic social services in health, nutrition, food and education for the poorest population strata, while creating infrastructure, incomes, food security and environmental sustainability. This strategy is based on a firm engagement to support governance and leadership by the Haitian authorities of the critical socio-economic development process they are engaged in. We strongly feel and hope not only that these measures will reduce the risk of further civil unrest, but that they will also represent the best investment for the future of the country.

There is no doubt that, while the security situation in Haiti has improved since the Mission's initial deployment in 2004, Haitian people need more tangible improvements in their daily lives. A poor, hungry and desperate population is simply not compatible with stability.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ms. Yvonne Tsikata, Country Director for the Caribbean of the World Bank.

Ms. Tsikata: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to participate in this debate on Haiti. I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for his comprehensive briefing on the security situation in Haiti. As requested, I will briefly outline the World Bank's programme in Haiti and will also touch on our collaboration with the United Nations system.

The World Bank Group's current engagement with Haiti is governed by an interim strategy for 2007 and 2008. This interim strategy is based on twin pillars, which touch on many of the issues that speakers have alluded to: first, delivering hope to the population by helping the Government deliver quick wins in basic service provision and job creation; and secondly, restoring credibility to Haitian institutions by deepening reforms that promote long-term good governance and institutional development.

The interim strategy envisioned a \$68 million programme of five International Development Association (IDA) grants for 2007, which were all approved as planned, in the areas of electricity, economic governance, rural water and sanitation, education and disaster risk reduction.

In 2008, the World Bank increased its support beyond the projections of the strategy by a factor of three, in response to the food and climatic shocks. Specifically, IDA approvals for the year increased to \$39 million, through four projects in the areas of emergency recovery, teacher training, urban community development and budget support and response to the food crisis.

Looking forward, we are currently in the process of preparing a new country assistance strategy for the period 2009 to 2012, and this will go to our Board in June. The proposed strategy has three areas of focus: first, promoting growth and local development; secondly, investing in human capital; and thirdly, reducing vulnerability to disasters. Cutting across the strategy is a two-pronged approach, combining longer-term institution-building with support for the Government in the delivery of quick, visible results.

Even while we prepare the strategy, we have provided support to respond to the extraordinarily devastating impact of the tropical storms and hurricanes of this past August. Specifically, we have prepared and had approved a \$20 million emergency bridge reconstruction and vulnerability project, \$5 million in additional financing for emergency school reconstruction and an additional \$5 million for rural drinking water supply and sanitation.

Our private sector wing, the International Finance Corporation, which has previously made investments totalling over \$50 million in Haiti, will foster private sector development through both direct lending and technical assistance. They will focus on three main sectors: the financial markets, where they will look at trade financing, microfinance lending and small and medium-sized enterprises; manufacturing; and infrastructure. They will also provide technical assistance looking at business skills for small and medium-sized enterprises, free trade zones, investment promotion and improving the Doing Business indicators.

With respect to collaboration with the United Nations, we have worked closely with the United Nations and with other development partners in Haiti, both at the level of general donor coordination and at the specific level of individual projects that we partner on. I would like to mention four specific examples with respect to the United Nations.

The first is a joint initiative between the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the World Bank to rehabilitate infrastructure in the volatile Martissant neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince.

We also have a strong partnership with the World Food Programme in the area of reducing malnutrition. We have held a number of joint missions and are working with other partners, such as UNICEF, the Pan-American Health Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank and the United States Agency for International Development. As a result of those meetings, participants and agencies have identified several specific actions for the coming months.

We continue to work closely with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development on food and agriculture issues following our joint mission last year after the food crisis.

Finally, we supported the Government of Haiti through a joint mission with the United Nations and the European Union on the post-damage needs assessment following the four tropical storms and hurricanes. As noted by other speakers, the devastation arising from those natural disasters was unprecedented. The situation is compounded by the global financial crisis, working primarily through the channel of remittances.

At the same time, there are opportunities for Haiti right now. As President Bob Zoellick noted during his visit to Haiti last October, MINUSTAH's success in stabilizing the situation must be accompanied by economic development gains, with strong bilateral and multilateral support. The upcoming donor conference, to be hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington on 14 April, offers an important opportunity for such international support and for the international community to demonstrate concretely its support for the Government and people of Haiti. We urge strong, consistent and comprehensive support through the donor conference.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ms. Dora Currea, General Manager of the Department of Caribbean Countries of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Ms. Currea: Haiti is the most vulnerable of the member countries of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with the highest poverty rates and some of the most challenging indicators. Some 7.5 million

Haitians lived below the poverty line even before the multiple crises of 2008. As a new Government came to power by democratic means in 2007, expectations rose and, for the first time in some time, per capita gross domestic product growth was positive. A measure of political, social and economic stability was achieved. Without a doubt, the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti contributed to that achievement.

However, the 2008 food and oil price shocks provoked riots that led to the fall of one Government and pushed more Haitians into extreme poverty. The year 2008 turned out to be an exceptionally difficult year, even considering Haiti's turbulent history. Those events focused efforts on disaster relief. But now is the time to relaunch the Government's growth and poverty-reduction strategy. To ensure that the strategy promptly translates into improved welfare for the majority of Haitians, a renewed partnership with donors is required.

That is the purpose of the conference to be held on 14 April at IDB headquarters. We are pleased to host that conference. The IDB is Haiti's main multilateral source of financing. IDB member countries will make the largest contribution when Haiti is granted debt relief later this year. Moreover, that will be financed from internal sources. In response to 2008 shocks, our Governments doubled grant financing for Haiti to \$100 million, reaffirming the institution's solidarity with its most vulnerable member country.

The Collier report commissioned by the Secretary General has been a key input for the conference. It has focused attention on the opportunities for success in Haiti if there is coordinated and immediate action on a few priority sectors to implement a strategy that targets job creation.

The conference will seek financing for reconstruction and economic recovery. The Government's priority projects cover investments in schools, hospitals and the water supply, along with measures that promote food security and safeguard the environment in preparation for the coming hurricane season. The priority projects will help Haiti to restore pre-hurricane levels of social service provision. Road and electricity investments are meant to leverage productive activities. It is the Government's hope that donors will either pledge new funds or realign existing resources towards the financing of these priority projects.

Public works projects, however, are not the only source of job creation. Authorities also target private investment to take advantage of the unprecedented market access to the United States.

More specifically, the conference will seek pledges for budget support. Despite the 2008 external shocks, Haitian authorities managed to maintain economic stability and stay on track on the commitments under the International Monetary Fund's programme, which is an essential condition for debt relief. To close the financing gap for the current fiscal year, authorities cut \$75 million from the investment budget and will resort to \$50 million in bridge financing from the central bank. Thus, authorities are urgently seeking \$125 million in budget support.

Finally, the conference will aim to reach an agreement on a new cooperation paradigm. The renewed partnership is based on mutual accountability. Haitian authorities will commit to reforms to strengthen governance and enhance the business environment. Donors are invited to support those reforms, which seek to ensure greater sustainability and effectiveness, while moving to align their programmes with the Government's priorities and channel resources through the budget.

As the Secretary General noted in a recent opinion column in *The New York Times*, this is Haiti's moment. We look to the 14 April conference for donors to invest in Haiti and pave the way for potential investors to do the same.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Niky Fabiancic, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme.

Mr. Fabiancic (*spoke in Spanish*): As a member of the team of the Latin American and Caribbean regional directors of United Nations agency system, on behalf of Director Rebeca Grynspan and the team, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak in the Security Council on the question concerning Haiti.

The recent high-level Security Council visit to Haiti and that by the Secretary-General with former United States President Bill Clinton have raised great expectations in both Haiti and the international community. They have also been largely responsible for establishing an environment conducive to reaffirming and revitalizing the international

community's unshakable commitment to Haiti's success. Those visits have highlighted the good work done by Haiti's authorities and people, with the support of the international community, to put the country on the path towards recovery and development after having faced a series of crises and unprecedented natural disasters in 2008.

The Government of Prime Minister Michelle Pierre-Louis was able to maintain macroeconomic stability. With the support of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), agencies of the United Nations system, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGO), she was able to provide a strong response to the food crisis and the chaos produced by the hurricanes that assailed the country. Nevertheless, Haiti continues to face enormous challenges. Governance is weak. Recovery from the loss and damage caused by natural disasters has been slow. Food supplies do not meet demand.

This is an opportune moment for Haiti, as consensus has been developed as to what must be done in the coming years. The poverty reduction strategy paper has helped to identify the major national priorities, initiatives and efforts needed to put Haiti on the path towards sustainable development and on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In that regard, fully in line with the poverty reduction strategy, late last year, the Government of Haiti and the United Nations agency system agreed on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Haiti for the period 2009 to 2011.

At present, the Government is energetically leading efforts to identify priority programmes and efforts to be presented in Washington on 14 April during the high-level donor conference. That event will be an opportunity not only to renew commitments and increase economic support for Haiti, but also to continue to strengthen the country's stability, especially through a renewed partnership between the Government of Haiti and the international community and, above all, among Haitians themselves. We are certain that, at the conference, the Government of Haiti will present a clear, agreed vision for the future.

The need for a robust, focused economic strategy has been sufficiently analysed by Professor Paul Collier and other distinguished colleagues. The agencies of the United Nations system endorse the

approaches set out in the report. But there will be no economic development without a reduction in the vulnerability of the poor population, and I want therefore to stress the importance of promoting an inclusive and equitable social agenda. We believe that economic and social agendas must be mutually reinforcing: an economic programme or agenda intended to create sustainable jobs is an absolute necessity and would without question have a great impact in terms of reducing poverty. Its impact will be greater if it is simultaneously complemented by a social agenda that could help the most vulnerable and needy, paying particular attention to the situation of children and women. If well coordinated and integrated, the two agendas could significantly help buttress social peace and stability. Achievements in the social sphere is key to providing the time that the economic programme needs to put down roots and grow, thus creating the conditions for significant investment to return to Haiti.

We believe that it is essential and urgent to provide incentives for the creation of jobs, especially jobs for women and young people; promote agricultural activities that require many workers, that restore the productive capacity of the land and that respect the environment; and improve the low quality of and limited access to basic services.

Because of time constraints, I shall not list all the achievements and contributions to Haitian development made by the agencies of the United Nations system. Nor shall I provide details of the significant improvements made in coordination among agencies and between the agencies and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH); the recent high-level Security Council mission was able to observe this for itself. The agencies of the United Nations system have the experience, the knowledge and the commitment to support and work with the Government of Haiti in attaining its national priorities. The system's activities are carried out within the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which I mentioned earlier. We are concerned at the wide gap between the financing needed to carry them out and what is currently available. I wish to note that only 26 per cent of the necessary funds are available.

After the natural disasters of 2008, the Government of Haiti and the United Nations system, including the World Bank, adopted a somewhat new

approach to assessing damage and losses and to identify what needs to be done to put most of the affected communities back on their feet. The conclusions of the assessment are very clear and will be useful when it is time to rebuild. They also confirm the critical and urgent need to tackle Haiti's extreme vulnerability to natural disasters. If we fail to do this, we run the risk of permanently losing much of the development investment that is being made.

Let me also mention fully operational rule of law is essential to guarantee robust economic and social programmes. That is the main reason why, through the Development Assistance Framework, the agencies of the United Nations system have made a commitment to redouble their efforts to strengthen and modernize Haitian institutions throughout the country and to promote democratic dialogue.

While we are heartened by the progress that can be seen in Haiti today, the situation is precarious, and ensuring the sustainability of what has been achieved poses a major challenge. We cannot forget the brutal daily reality lived by thousands of Haitians. The agencies of the United Nations system have long provided cooperation in Haiti and hope to continue to be an esteemed, trustworthy and efficient partner.

The Regional Directors for Latin American and the Caribbean are firmly committed to successfully implementing the programmes of the agencies of the United Nations system, in support of national priorities and in accordance with our mandates, in close cooperation with MINUSTAH, in order to move forward on the economic and social agenda and improve democratic governance in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ms. Corinne Delechat, Mission Chief for Haiti of the International Monetary Fund.

Ms. Delechat: I am grateful for the Council's invitation and for the opportunity to give this briefing.

Haiti's situation has improved significantly since 2004, as others have noted. But important challenges lie ahead. In the past five years, Haiti's has made great strides in macroeconomic management in partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but also thanks to strong donor support and improved security under the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Real growth in gross domestic product turned positive again; inflation declined from 40 per

cent to less than 5 per cent today; fiscal discipline was restored; and international reserves have increased. In spite of the unprecedented shocks during 2008 — not only the hurricanes but also high food prices — the authorities were able to maintain macroeconomic stability and remain on track under the programme supported by the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). However, this was not easy, and these hard-won gains remain very fragile.

First, an increasingly tense political situation could complicate economic policy-making in the period ahead. Here, I agree with the analysis of Ambassador Annabi. In recent months, political tensions have slowed the passage of the budget and of economic governance measures needed to secure important debt relief. There is also a risk that the upcoming senate elections could complicate an already difficult relationship between the executive and legislative powers. Efforts will have to be made to develop a broad political consensus around the Government's efforts to preserve macroeconomic stability and raise living standards for the poor.

Secondly, the global crisis is starting to affect Haiti, mainly through trade and fiscal linkages. We anticipate that the effect on the external current account deficit of weaker export demand and lower remittances will be cushioned by lower food and fuel prices. Lower import prices have also helped bring down inflation, but they are creating a significant shortfall in customs revenue, estimated at about \$50 million for fiscal year 2009 if no additional measures are taken. On the financial-sector side, for the time being, commercial banks appear to remain well capitalized and profitable, but the quality of loan portfolios should be monitored closely.

The Fund has stepped up its efforts to help Haiti respond to the negative impact of the global crisis as well as last year's hurricanes. On 11 February, the Fund's Executive Board approved an increase of \$37 million in IMF support, the second increase under the current PRGF arrangement; the first was in response to high food prices. Since 2006, Haiti has received a total of \$136 million in PRGF disbursements. The increase from the Fund in February is roughly equal to the additional post-hurricane budget support pledged by donors, which we hope will be disbursed soon.

Haiti is also on track to receive almost \$1 billion in debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor

Countries and Multilateral Debt Relief initiatives by the end of June. Annual debt service savings of \$35 million to \$40 million would free resources for poverty-reducing expenditures. Conditions to reach the completion point under the initiative include improvements in health, education, domestic revenue mobilization, debt management and governance. IMF and World Bank staff are closely monitoring progress in these areas and are prepared to move quickly with the provision of debt relief to Haiti once remaining reform measures are implemented.

Given the immense needs even before the hurricanes, the authorities are seeking an additional \$125 million in budget support and more than \$700 million in project financing at the high-level donor conference to be held in mid-April. The new budget support would help close a \$50 million budget gap and finance critical investment projects. The requested project support would be allocated to priorities within the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the post-hurricane reconstruction programme. However, to date little additional support has been identified, raising the risk that the April conference will not be successful. That, in turn, would further undermine the authorities' efforts and is in the context of an already declining overall budget support envelope for Haiti.

The IMF is committed to helping Haiti present its case to the international community and will send a delegation to the conference led by the Deputy Managing Director. We urge the other donors to come forward at the Washington, D.C., conference and provide the much-needed financing. We think that

failure to adequately support the authorities' budget may prevent the implementation of investment projects essential to creating jobs, supporting growth and raising living standards. That could risk jeopardizing political and social stability. Haiti needs more effective and more reliable external assistance, primarily in the form of budget support.

Looking ahead, important challenges remain to consolidating stabilization gains, promoting growth and reducing poverty in the midst of the global slowdown. Over the medium term, it will be important to reduce structural and institutional bottlenecks, raise domestic resources to support higher social and capital spending, develop the financial sector and create favourable conditions for private sector investment to boost exports, achieve sustainable growth and reduce poverty. The potential benefits of that approach were highlighted in a recent report by Professor Paul Collier. The report usefully suggests focusing interventions on a few key sectors, including the promotion of export-processing zones, to reap the benefits of preferential access to the United States market.

As mentioned by the Secretary-General, there is hope for Haiti. Renewed international partnership along the lines of mutual accountability can help Haiti turn the corner.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 4 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.

